

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to urge you to support the pending merger of EchoStar and HUGHES, the parent company of DIRECTV. Although I am not a DIRECTV customer, I believe the merger will increase video and broadband choices for consumers like me because the combined company will provide increased competition to cable companies.

The combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable operators by being able to offer me a substantial number of local TV channels via satellite in my market area.

I currently have broadband access to the Internet, but the combination of EchoStar and HUGHES will result in increased competition in the broadband market by providing an affordable high-speed Internet service nationwide via satellite.

I would also like to see combination of EchoStar and Hughes to also provide a few (4-7) free or 'in the clear' channels in order to offset the high initial investment of a satellite receivers which typically runs a few hundred dollars in order to be able to view satellite television in more than one room. It is my understanding that in Europe, many satellite broadcasts are free (not encrypted). [<http://www.hf.uib.no/smi/ksv/satfaq.html>]. This would give me a great incentive to go out and buy a satellite dish.

I would also like the new company to also increase the number of HDTV channel offerings, since I will be in the market for a new high definition television.

I appreciate your consideration of my views.

Sincerely,

Mark Specjal
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Schaumburg, IL 60194